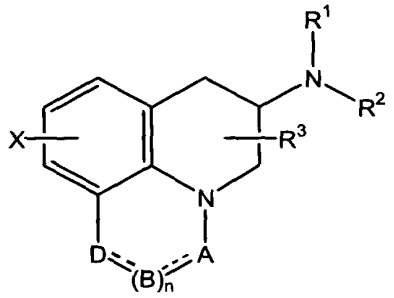
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A pharmaceutical composition in a form of an orally deliverable tablet comprising as active pharmaceutical agent a compound of formula



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein

R^1, R^2 and R^3 are the same or different and are H, C_{1-6} alkyl (optionally phenyl substituted), C_{3-5} alkenyl or alkynyl or C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, or where R^3 is as above and R^1 and R^2 are cyclized with the attached N atom to form pyrrolidinyl, piperidinyl, morpholinyl, 4-methylpiperazinyl or imidazolyl groups;

X is H, F, Cl, Br, I, OH, C_{1-6} alkyl or alkoxy, CN, carboxamide, carboxyl or (C_{1-6} alkyl)carbonyl;

A is CH, CH_2, CHF, CHCl, CHBr, CHI, $CHCH_3$, C=O, C=S, $CSCH_3$, C=NH, CNH_2, $CNHCH_3$, $CNHCOOCH_3$, CNHCN, SO_2 or N;

B is CH, CH_2, CHF, CHCl, CHBr, CHI, C=O, N, NH or NCH_3, and n is 0 or 1; and

D is CH, CH_2, CHF, CHCl, CHBr, CHI, C=O, O, N, NH or NCH_3;

said compound or salt thereof being dispersed in a matrix comprising a hydrophilic polymer and a starch having a tensile strength of at least about 0.15 kN cm^{-2} at a solid fraction representative of the tablet.

2. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the starch has a tensile strength of at least about 0.175 kN cm^{-2} at a solid fraction representative of the tablet.

3. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the starch has a tensile strength of at least about 0.2 kN cm^{-2} at a solid fraction representative of the tablet.

4. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the starch is a pregelatinized starch.

5. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the starch is present in an amount of about

25% to about 75%, preferably about 40% to about 70%, and more preferably about 45% to about 65%, by weight.

6. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the hydrophilic polymer is selected from the group consisting of methylcellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, carmellose sodium and carbomer.

7. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the hydrophilic polymer is hydroxypropylmethylcellulose.

8. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the hydrophilic polymer is present in an amount of about 20% to about 70% by weight.

9. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the hydrophilic polymer is present in an amount of about 30% to about 60% by weight.

10. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the hydrophilic polymer is present in an amount of about 35% to about 50% by weight.

11. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the active pharmaceutical agent has solubility not less than about 10 mg/ml.

12. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the active pharmaceutical agent has solubility not less than about 50 mg/ml.

13. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the active pharmaceutical agent has solubility not less than about 100 mg/ml.

14. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the active pharmaceutical agent is a salt of sumanirole.

15. The composition of Claim 14 wherein the salt is sumanirole maleate.

16. The composition of Claim 14 that comprises about 0.5 to about 25 mg sumanirole per tablet.

17. The composition of Claim 14 that comprises about 0.5, 1, 2, 4, 8, 12 or 24 mg sumanirole per tablet.

18. The composition of Claim 1 wherein the active pharmaceutical agent is a salt of (R)-5,6-dihydro-5-(methylamino)-4H-imidazo[4,5-ij]-quinoline-2(1H)-thione.

19. The composition of Claim 18 wherein the salt is the maleate salt.

20. A pharmaceutical composition in a form of an orally deliverable tablet comprising sumanirole maleate in an amount of about 0.5, 1, 2, 4, 8, 12 or 24 mg, dispersed in a matrix comprising (a) hydroxypropylmethylcellulose type 2208 in an amount of about 35% to about 50% by weight of the tablet and (b) a pregelatinized starch having a tensile strength of at least about 0.15 kN cm^{-2} at a solid fraction of 0.8, in an amount of about 45% to about 65% by weight of the tablet.

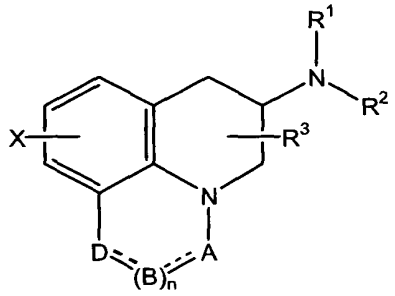
21. A method of treatment of a subject having a condition or disorder for which a dopamine agonist is indicated, the method comprising orally administering to the subject the pharmaceutical composition of Claim 1.

22. The method of Claim 21 wherein the composition is administered no more than once daily.

23. The method of Claim 21 wherein the condition or disorder is Parkinson's disease.

24. The method of Claim 21 wherein the condition or disorder is sexual dysfunction.

25. A process for preparing a sustained-release pharmaceutical composition in a form of an orally deliverable tablet, the process comprising selecting by a suitable test a starch having a tensile strength of at least about 0.15 kN cm^{-2} at a solid fraction representative of the tablet; admixing with the selected starch a hydrophilic polymer and an active pharmaceutical agent that is a compound of formula



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein

R^1, R^2 and R^3 are the same or different and are H, C_{1-6} alkyl (optionally phenyl substituted), C_{3-5} alkenyl or alkynyl or C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, or where R^3 is as above and R^1 and R^2 are cyclized with the attached N atom to form pyrrolidinyl, piperidinyl, morpholinyl, 4-methylpiperazinyl or imidazolyl groups;

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B is CH, CH_2, CHF, CHCl, CHBr, CHI, C=O, N, NH or NCH_3, and n is 0 or 1; and

D is CH, CH_2, CHF, CHCl, CHBr, CHI, C=O, O, N, NH or NCH_3;

to provide a mixture wherein the agent is dispersed in a matrix comprising the polymer and the starch; and compressing the mixture to form said tablet.